Michaela Community School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of meeting Wednesday 15th December 2021

Date and time:	**Location**:
Wednesday 15th December 2021, 5.30pm	Meeting held remotely via Zoom

Attendees:		
Name	**Present**	**Role**
Chidi Amadi (CA)	Present	Governor (Chair)
Sharon Brittan (SBri)	Present	Governor (Vice Chair)
Pia Decarlucci (PD)	Present	Governor
Mohsin Drabu (MD)	Apologies	Governor (Finance)
Katharine Birbalsingh (KB)	Present	Head Teacher
Katie Ashford (KA)	Present	Staff Governor
Iskander Fernandez (IF)*	Present	Parent Governor
Adeyemi Fasogbon (AF)*	Present	Parent Governor (Careers)
Matthew Godfrey (MG)	Apologies	Governor (Careers)
Rebecca Williams (RW)	Present	Governor
Lundi Nyoni (LN)	Present	Governor (Finance)
Daniel Hall (DH)	Apologies	Governor
Stephanie Ting (ST)	Present	Governor (Safeguarding, SEND)
Brett Williams Yale (BWY)	Apologies	DHT
Ali Mansfield (AM)	Present	Clerk

No.	FGB Items	Action
1.	**Welcome and apologies** CA welcomed governors to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mohsin Drabu, Matthew Godfrey and Brett Williams Yale. Iskander Fernandez and Adeyemi Fasogbon arrived at item 5.	
2.	**Declaration of Business Interests** ***Governors to declare any changes to the register of business interests:*** No changes to the register were declared.	

Michaela Community School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of meeting Wednesday 15th December 2021

	Governors to declare any conflicts of interest for this agenda: No conflicts of interest were declared.	
3.	**Minutes of last meeting (20.10.21)** ***To agree the minutes of the previous meeting:*** The minutes of the meeting held on the 20.10.21 were agreed as an accurate record. ***Matters arising not covered elsewhere on this agenda:*** None.	
4.	**Governing Body Organisation** ***To agree remit of Finance Governors:*** At the moment the role of Finance Governors is an advisory role. Governors **AGREED** that this should continue to be the case. Finance Governors will review and make recommendations on the following: o Review annual budget and recommend to FGB for approval o Review monthly management accounts and highlight any concerns o Review Finance Policies and recommend to FGB for approval o Meet annually with the auditors to receive the statutory accounts and recommend to FGB for approval o Prepare SRMSAT for review and approval by FGB CA is stepping back from this role. Finance Governors are Mohsin Drabu and Lundi Nyoni.	
5.	**Head Teacher's Report** ***Sixth form*** Growth of the Sixth Form has been impacted by Covid. There have only been one set of GCSE results (2019) and the advertisement campaign on the tube has not had the intended effect because numbers using the tube have been greatly reduced. However, the current Sixth Form, though small, is doing well. A large number of attendees at the recent open event were there through word of mouth which indicates that current students are speaking highly of Michaela. Q: Should we ask previous students who are currently at university to help in recruitment for the sixth form? A: Not sure that this would make a difference. The key information is that 75% went to Russell Group universities. The real problem is competition from the grammar schools which means that we are not getting the top level pupils. This is also the case at Year 7, we get the pupils who have failed the 11 plus. But our amazing staff get good results from these pupils. However clever, children deserve an excellent education and great teachers. Q: What is the situation in Stevenage? A: There are no grammar schools in Stevenage so we will get a proper comprehensive intake. Q: Why do you think the Tik Tok campaign has not been more	

successful?
A: There are lots of views, but no-one has come through that route so we assume that we are not reaching the sort of pupils who would want to come to Michaela.

Pupil Attendance

Covid has impacted attendance massively and there is a real concern that it will not be possible to return to the exceptional attendance pre Covid. Attendance at the moment is 92% which is good given that some pupils are having to isolate following positive tests.
We are desperately hoping that there are no school closures in January.
Q: Why the drop from 94.7% to 92%?
A: Attendance reflects the situation in the wider country. We still have some pupils who would never miss a day if they did not have to, but some others are taking advantage of the situation and of course some are actually ill.

Staffing

Staff continue to be exceptional as always.

Some have had to isolate for testing positive, but otherwise staff attendance is excellent.

At present there are a handful of teachers leaving at the end of the year. New teachers have been recruited, some will start in the summer term and others in the autumn term. Morale continues to be good, but Heads of Year have had 5 years of hard work with nothing to show for it in terms of external exam results which is very disappointing for them.

Visitors

Visitors returned in October but since the recent announcements from government visits have been suspended again for the time being. This is a great shame as pupils love the opportunity to show off their school.

Exams

There continues to be uncertainty around exams and so it is difficult to get momentum going among the pupils as there is no sense of what they are moving towards. The government says that exams will take place, but Ofqual are telling schools to ensure they have regular evidence of the grades pupils are working at in case this does not happen. Exam results are very important for disadvantaged pupils as this is the only way they can prove themselves. Some companies are bringing in their own tests as Teacher Assessed results are deemed meaningless.

Pupil progress

Pupils are making good progress and teachers are doing everything they can to catch up what has been lost over the two lockdowns. Internal exams will take place in February and results will be shared

Michaela Community School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of meeting Wednesday 15th December 2021

	with governors at the next meeting. ***Website*** The school website has been upgraded and a second website is being built for Stevenage.	
6.	**Governor Visits** ***To discuss arrangement and remit of visits for next term:*** It was planned to invite all governors in to school for a focused visit next term but these visits will be postponed until the Covid situation improves.	
7.	**Safeguarding Report** KA presented the report from Olivia Dyer (DSL). There are 5 pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan, 2 pupils subject to Child in Need Plans, 2 pupils subject to Family Solutions support and 4 pupils subject to internal monitoring. The school continues to work closely with the relevant agencies. There are currently 3 Looked After Children on roll. Frequent meetings take place between the school, the carer, and the virtual school to support these pupils. **SEND support** As a free school Michaela can choose who to work with, but SEND and Safeguarding are still closely linked to the LA. This sometimes results in a clash of values, particularly with regard to the low expectations of SEND children from the LA. When Ofsted visited they were complimentary about the systems in place for SEND at Michaela. In particular, pupils on the autistic spectrum are able to flourish because of the structures and routines in place across the school. Q: Is it compulsory to access LA support for SEND pupils? A: No, but it can be difficult if the child has established links, for example physiotherapists who are inflexible and want to take children out of lessons. Q: Could we request other providers? A: Unfortunately they don't exist. Q: How many SEND pupils are there at Michaela? A: 15% have complex or additional needs. There are others who would be SEND in another setting but are in an environment where they are able to learn well. Q: Are SEND pupils making good progress? A: The 2019 exams demonstrated good progress, but there has been no external data since then. Q: Is there a risk in not engaging with the LA? A: We do engage where we need to, for example when meeting the criteria of an EHCP, but external providers come in on our terms.	

Michaela Community School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of meeting Wednesday 15th December 2021

8.	**Finance Report** ***Report from Finance Manager:*** Report was circulated with the agenda for the meeting, there were no questions from governors. ***Budget position at month 2:*** o Income for the period is £31351 positive to budget. This includes £6437 for the National Tutoring Programme which must be returned if not spent. An offsetting cost centre has therefore been set up showing the funding as spent in full. The criteria for spending the funding are strict, SLT are considering how best it can be used. o Expenditure is £5546 positive to budget. o Cost of PE provision was omitted from the budget in error. (There has been no external PE provision during Covid). Cost for the year is in the region of £20k. It is likely that this will be covered by savings elsewhere in the curriculum budget. o There is a deficit of £23k against a forecast deficit of £60k at the end of month 2. This is because the Pupil Number Adjustment is front loaded. ***Finance Policy – amendments to limits (pages 3 & 4):*** At the request of governors, the authorisation limits for the HT have been reduced to £50k. Limits for disposals have been amended to match the Procurement Policy. Amended policy **APPROVED.** ***Procurement Policy:*** Policy **APPROVED.**	
9.	**Academy Accounts 2020/21** ***Finance Governors to report on meeting with auditors, Blick Rothenberg:*** MD, CA and AM met with Mark Hart, Ella Waddington and Sam Tester of Blick Rothenberg on Thursday 9th December 2021. CA reported on the meeting and highlighted the following: ***o*** This was another 'clean' audit with no issues raised ***o*** The trustees' report was updated re results, impact of Covid and MAT development ***o*** Reserves at the yearend stood at £544876. However, this figure includes a 'loss' of £318K on the pension fund which is purely an accounting figure. When this is removed reserves to be carried forward are £862876. Although this is a healthy position, it is a significant drop because of the recent building reconfiguration works, and it will be necessary to marshal these reserves prudently ***o*** The auditors recommended more frequent meetings throughout the year which will be actioned ***To receive and agree auditors' finalised accounts for 2020/21 for submission to the ESFA and Companies House:*** The finalised accounts having been circulated to governors with the agenda, and following the recommendation of the Finance Governors, were **APPROVED** for submission to the ESFA and Companies House.	

Michaela Community School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of meeting Wednesday 15th December 2021

10.	**AOB** ***Gifts & Hospitality Policy:*** Governors noted and ratified this policy which had been approved by the Head Teacher**.** ***Direct Award Route to Appoint IT support:*** Following advice from Tom Legge (Premier Advisory) it is proposed to appoint RM as IT support for a further year by the Direct Award Route. Normally the contract would go out to tender this year, but because of the major changes to the contract which will be needed when the Stevenage school opens, it is sensible to wait and go out to tender at that point. The contract was moved from Civica to RM several years ago because Civica were unable to provide the bespoke service required. At that time the contract was still relatively small, but it has increased over recent years as the school has grown, and now stands at around £40k per year, hence the need for a formal procurement process. There will be a cost of £2k for Premier to oversee. Governors **AGREED** to this proposal. ***Other:*** Q: There were some concerns around safety with the new road. Has this been resolved? A: Yes, a zebra crossing has been put in which makes a big difference.	
11.	**Date of next meeting** Doodle poll to be circulated. **Items for next meeting** ***Risk Register*** ***Key Performance Indicators***	